

SPECIAL SESSION-----ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL**July 26, 2002****12:00 noon**

A special meeting of Roanoke City Council was called to order on Friday, July 26, 2002, at 12:00 noon for a meeting of the Roanoke Valley Leadership Summit, which meeting was held at the Vinton War Memorial, 814 E. Washington Avenue, Vinton, Virginia. The meeting was hosted by the Town of Vinton.

ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members William H. Carder, M. Rupert Cutler, Alfred T. Dowe, Jr., Linda F. Wyatt and Mayor Ralph K. Smith-----5.

ABSENT: Council Members William D. Bestpitch and C. Nelson Harris-----2.

OTHERS PRESENT: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager, City of Roanoke; Stephanie M. Moon, Deputy City Clerk, City of Roanoke; and representatives from various surrounding localities.

The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Don Davis, Mayor, Town of Vinton.

Following lunch, the business meeting convened at 12:35 p.m., with Mayor Davis welcoming everyone in attendance.

VINTON COMMUNITY INFORMATION: A video was presented highlighting activities and accomplishments of the Town of Vinton and the Roanoke Valley.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY REPORT: Dr. Victor Iannello, Vice Chair, Fifth Planning District Regional Alliance, presented a video highlighting the following Regional Economic Strategy:

A Call to Action

Population Growth: below State and U. S. averages.

Employment:

- **Total Growth:** below State and U. S. averages
- **Manufacturing:** greater declines than State and U. S.

Educational Attainment: below State and U. S. averages.

Per Capita Income: below State and U. S. averages.

Goals for Strategy

Establish common guiding principles for organizations and jurisdictions in the region.

Identify critical assets and needs of our region for economic prosperity.

Build consensus on key regional priorities.

Provide a “song sheet” of agreed-upon actions for organizations and governments.

Approach

Engage services of Economic Development experts:

- **Eva Klein and Associates**
- **Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness**

Build on prior studies, existing plans, and ongoing activities.

Interview leaders in business, government, education, and community.

Convene Planning Leadership Group to:

- **develop strategies and tactics**
- **prioritize**
- **build consensus**

Prepare Regional Economic Strategy.

Vision Statement

We will elevate regional prosperity by creating new patterns of growth through a strategic transformation that cultivates:

- **global visibility**
- **new and maturing knowledge-based enterprises**
- **competitive industry clusters**
- **higher-skilled people**
- **quality of life and environment**

Visibility

Challenge: The region’s economic growth is impeded by size, self-image, and lack of identity.

Strategy: Achieve national and international visibility for the region — to compete successfully for advanced technology growth.

Goal: Establish the region as a competitive, desirable location for living, visiting, and doing business.

Tactics:

- create a coalition of existing marketing organizations to develop mutual opportunities to increase visibility for the region.
- develop an image for the region with a single brand identity.
- increase population ranking of region by pursuing an enlarged Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Connectivity

Challenge: Geographic isolation increases costs of doing business in a global economy. Lack of connections between activity centers within the region makes it difficult to create a sense of region and critical mass.

Strategy: Reduce perceived or real distance — both within the region, between the region, and the outside world.

Goal: Improve the availability and reduce the cost of intra-regional and inter-regional transportation.

Tactics:

- develop a broader regional process for addressing long-term transportation issues and prioritizing regional needs.
- accelerate improvements to broadband/multi-media access throughout the region.
- reduce cost of air service to Roanoke by attracting a low-fare carrier through a subsidy pool.
- make passenger rail service a reality.

Quality of Life Amenities

Challenge: Lack of lifestyle amenities for knowledge workers.

Strategy: Attract/retain knowledge-oriented enterprises and people, using existing natural assets and quality of life in marketing, while developing additional amenities that appeal to these people and enterprises.

Goal: Develop, package, and promote lifestyle amenities for knowledge workers while preserving environment and quality of life.

Tactics:

- package and promote outdoor and cultural amenities for knowledge workers.
- consider lifestyles and amenity needs of knowledge workers in community planning and development.

Knowledge Work Force

Challenge: Collective skills/knowledge of the local work force needs to increase, for local companies to compete globally and to attract new companies.

Strategy: Elevate the knowledge work force at all levels by improving skills and knowledge of individual workers, improving responsiveness to companies, and recruiting knowledge workers from outside region.

Goal: Build knowledge work force capacity through focused training, retraining, and attraction of new skilled workers.

Tactics:

- create a campaign that targets the region's natives and college alumni and connects them to job opportunities.
- establish permanent vehicles for K - 12/business interaction.
- create a regional Higher Education Consortium to continually identify business needs, better integrate regional resources, and promote higher education assets.
- create an easily accessible information base of higher education resources in the region.
- develop an advocacy strategy, focusing on funding for higher education, especially workforce programs in community colleges.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Challenge: Creation and growth of knowledge businesses must be accelerated to increase the quantity of high paying jobs in the region.

Strategy: Strengthen the region's "soft infrastructure" that supports innovation and entrepreneurship.

Goal: Stimulate creation and growth of knowledge businesses by increasing availability of capital, innovation, intellectual property, and entrepreneurial talent.

Tactics:

- create a regional venture capital fund of adequate size and stature to be a force in attracting and retaining growing businesses to the region.
- organize an advocacy strategy for Virginia Tech and the region to achieve its research goals.
- mobilize the technology community to work with Virginia Tech to evaluate and strengthen all aspects of its intellectual property and technology transfer activities.
- market this region to experienced entrepreneurs and connect them to the region's entrepreneur network.

Economic Transformation

Challenge: Regional prosperity depends on the number of high paying jobs in the region and a diverse economy.

Strategy: Diversify the regional economy by emphasizing the cultivation of technology-driven companies.

Goal: Identify industry clusters and develop ways to cultivate them.

Tactics:

- update the 1999 cluster study to identify opportunities for cluster development.
- encourage local governments to use the Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority to share costs, revenues, and risk in developing business sites.
- create industry cluster associations to identify and implement opportunities for growth.
- update tourism/convention marketing strategy to take advantage of knowledge assets, village centers, and recreational assets.

Next Steps

Communicate the Regional Economic Strategy throughout the region.

Get endorsements from local jurisdictions and organizations.

Manage implementation of tactics.

Facilitate regional alliances for new initiatives.

Identify and monitor critical benchmarks of progress.

Mayor Davis expressed appreciation to Mr. Iannello for the presentation.

ROANOKE REGIONAL AIRPORT ALLIANCE: Mayor Smith expressed appreciation to the Town of Vinton for hosting the Leadership Summit Luncheon; and stated that the \$2 million grant to improve air service at the Roanoke Regional Airport was not awarded by the Federal Government. He called attention to his remarks at the last Summit Luncheon with regard to the importance of a Roanoke Regional Airport Alliance, and advised that Mr. Barry Duvall had been retained to coordinate efforts of the Roanoke Regional Airport Alliance.

REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY STUDY: Wayne G. Strickland, Executive Director, Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission, advised that a contract has been awarded to Black and Veatch Corp., to develop a long-range water supply system study for the region, in the amount of \$100,000.00; partnering with Dewberry and Davis, the Corporation will examine the area's residential, business and institutional water needs to determine if existing and planned resources are adequate to meet demand through 2050; and the study is expected to take six months for completion.

He further advised that the Alliance is funding half of the cost and the remaining portion will be funded on a per capita basis by the following seven participating localities: the Counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Franklin, and Roanoke; Roanoke City; City of Salem; and the Town of Vinton; and he extended an invitation to the localities to attend a news conference on Monday, July 29, 2002, at 10:30 a.m., at the Roanoke Regional Commission Office, 313 Luck Avenue, S. W., to introduce the engineering firm.

Mr. Strickland expressed appreciation to the local governing bodies for their participation and support.

OTHER BUSINESS OR COMMENTS:

Mr. Strickland advised that the next meeting of the Mayors and Chairs of the Leadership Summit will be hosted by Alleghany County on August 16, 2002.

On behalf of the City of Covington, Mayor Temple Kessinger, Jr., extended an invitation to host the next Leadership Summit Luncheon in October 2002.

Council Member Dowe encouraged the localities present to support the Roanoke Dazzle Basketball Team.

Council Member Wyatt suggested that the state legislators be invited to attend the next Leadership Summit meeting; whereupon, Mr. Strickland agreed to contact them to extend an invitation.

There being no further business, the luncheon meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

A P P R O V E D

ATTEST:

Deputy City Clerk

Mayor
